

Chapter 4

Towards an Enterprise Business Architecture Readiness Assessment Model

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ABSTRACT

Often at times many organisations fail to achieve the objectives of their enterprise business architecture (EBA). This can be attributed to lack of assessment of readiness. This is also because there are no models specific to EBA readiness assessment. The lack of readiness assessment before deployment often results to challenges such as uncoordinated business designs, lack of flow in processes, derailment of activities, which make cost of operations prohibitive, increase complexity in managing potential risks, and service stagnancy. These challenges led to this study whose aim was to propose a solution that can be used to assess the readiness of EBA in an organisation. From the interpretivist perspective, the case study approach was employed to gain better understanding of the factors that influence the readiness of EBA in an organisation. The hermeneutics approach was applied in the analysis of the data. The study reveals the factors that influence the deployment of business architecture in organisations.

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INTRODUCTION

The Enterprise Business Architecture (EBA) is one of the domains of Enterprise Architecture (EA) (Dang & Pekkola, 2017). Other domains of EA include Information, Technical and Application Architectures (Iyamu, 2015). According to Whittle and Myrick (2016), EBA provides the blueprint for business processes, events and activities, and focuses on both current and future views of an organisation. In the last two decades, the interest in EBA by both academic and business organisations continues to increase (Hadaya & Gagnon, 2017; Amit & Zott, 2015; Versteeg & Bouwman, 2006). EBA is considered to be the most dominant of the domain of EA, which includes the information, technical and application architectures (Whittle & Myrick, 2016). Based on the interest in the concept of EBA, many projects have been carried out by both academia and practitioners in the areas of development and implementation, as well as in practice (Wikusna, 2018; Sandkuhl et al., 2017).

EBA is used to define the critical aspects of organisational processes, its strategy, policies, monitoring methods and business organisation (Sandkuhl et al., 2017). Versteeg and Bouwman (2006) argue that EBA contributes to governance and the management of activities within the business and computing environments of an organisation. In Shaanika and Iyamu's (2018) view, EBA is used to define an enterprise from a business perspective and then leverages its formalised description to govern and manage change and transformation of environment trends. Minoli (2008) explains EBA as the architectural formulation of the business function, which comprises of documentation that outlines the company's most important business processes. Wikusna (2018) argues that EBA is a domain that contributes towards clarifying the complexities within an organisation whose purpose it is to develop functional, informative, process and application architectures.

Despite the benefits of the concept as discussed above, many organisations experience various challenges with EBA implementation and practice (Hadaya & Gagnon, 2017). According to Whittle and Myrick (2016), some of the challenges arise from the prioritisation of the business activities that always change. Also, some of the challenges of EBA include an understanding of factors such as the risks involved, success factors, as well as the design and implementation of the business for enterprise purposes (Gromoff, Bilinkis & Kazantsev, 2017). The challenges are often experienced at different stages of the concept, from development to implementation and post-implementation (Iyamu, 2015). This is attributable to the lack of a readiness assessment before the process was embarked upon in a specific environment.

An assessment reveals organisational strengths and weaknesses which increase the formidability of readiness in the deployment and manageability of a solution (Hedayati et al., 2014). Ajami et al. (2011) argue that assessment is an essential and critical stage prior to the implementation of solutions. It aims at evaluating preparedness of

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